

100,000 visitors. I have the opportunity to meet many of these tourists personally and I am always filled with pride and satisfaction when I learn from them that they are coming in ever increasing numbers from all over the United States, as far away as California and Hawaii, as well as from many foreign countries, to see our historic State House — once the capitol of the United States.

About three years ago, when I proposed to the General Assembly that our State should undertake a program of economic development, I had in mind, among other things, the need to expand the efforts to develop the travel industry. Although we had a limited program in the past, I was convinced that our State government should be doing a great deal more than it had to build up our tourist business. Furthermore, it was obvious to me that, by developing our travel resources, we would, at the same time, greatly strengthen our hand when it came to bringing new industry here, for it is well known much modern industry is attracted by these same features which appeal to tourists — for example, scenic areas and recreational facilities, good living and pleasant accommodations. The Legislature acted on my request to create the Department of Economic Development, and among other things, this new agency was assigned the job of travel development. The tourist promotion division was created, which, along with the business and Industrial Division and the Economic Research Division, has been carrying on the dynamic work of the Department, under its director, George W. Hubley, Jr., whom I appointed to carry out the aims and policies of Maryland's Economic Development Commission, headed by Harry A. Boswell, Jr.

I firmly believe, that, today, Maryland stands on the threshold of its greatest success in tourist development. While much of the groundwork has been laid, some basic tasks remain, if we want to attract tourists to our geographically small, but historically great State. For example, as I travel about Maryland, I have noticed the need for signs to make it easier for visitors to reach our historic, scenic, and recreational attractions. Also, if we want people from out-of-state to visit us, we should make them feel welcome when they cross our borders. I am hoping that, in the very near future, signs reading "welcome to historic Maryland" will be erected by the State Roads Commission at the major entry points on our borders. By the same token, visitors leaving our State should be given a courteous farewell by means of similar signs. I understand that interested officials of the State Roads Commission, the Department of Economic Development, and the Maryland Historical Society already are working on plans to bring this about.